

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 SS-15 NSC-05 INR-07 H-02 /049 W

----- 126591

R 100959Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9865

USDOC WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: CODEL, BEXP, UR, CZ, BU

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

VIENNA FOR EWTC

REF: STATE 160788

1. WHILE THERE ARE MANY BENEFITS TO BE REALIZED FROM CONGRESSIONAL VISIT OF TYPE PROPOSED IN REFTEL AND SUCH A VISIT WOULD BE WELCOMED BY POST, THE TIMING AND BULGARIAN HOSPITALITY POSE PROBLEMS.

2. A VISIT TO SOFIA FROM SEPTEMBER 7 TO 10 WOULD COME JUST AT THE TIME OF THE SEPTEMBER 9 NATIONAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS, THIS YEAR TO BE CELEBRATED SEPTEMBER 8, 9 AND 10. THE LEADERSHIP WILL BE TOTALLY TIED UP WITH VISITING SOCIALISTS DELEGATIONS OF THE HIGHEST RANK, AND TO MAKE MEANINGFUL APPOINTMENTS FOR US CONGRESSMEN COULD BE IMPOSSIBLE. FURTHERMORE HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS WILL AT THAT TIME NOT BE AVAILABLE IN SOFIA WHICH HAS CONSISTENTLY SUFFERED ACUTE ACCOMMODATION SHORTAGES DURING THE SEPTEMBER 9 PERIOD. ACCOMMODATIONS IN PLOVDIV FOR THE SIZE GROUP ENVISAGED WOULD ALSO BE NEAR IMPOSSIBLE AS PAST EXPERIENCE HAS AMPLY SHOWN.

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3. THE OTHER PROBLEM IS ONE OF BULGARIAN HOSPITALITY WHICH

WOULD BE EXTENDED BY THE BULGARIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. IF THE DELEGATION WERE TO COME IT WOULD BE WELCOME ONLY UNDER THE AUSPICES OF VLADIMIR BONEV, THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. AS IS WELL KNOWN IN WASHINGTON, THE BULGARIANS HAVE FOR SOME TIME BEEN INTERESTED IN AN OFFICIAL PARLIAMENTARY VISIT TO THE US. TO THIS END THEY HAVE GRACIOUSLY HOSTED A NUMBER OF US CONGRESSMEN. (BONEV HIMSELF PASSED THROUGH THE US LAST YEAR AND WAS DISCOURAGED FROM COMING TO WASHINGTON AND SHOWN ONLY MINIMUM COURTESIES IN NEW YORK.) IF THE PROPOSED VISIT IS TO BE MADE DESPITE THE VERY POOR TIMING, IT SHOULD THEREFORE COME WITH A FORMAL INVITATION FOR A RETURN BULGARIAN VISIT. OTHERWISE IT WILL BE AN IMPOSITION ON THE BULGARIAN HOSTS AND WILL CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT WE REGARD HOSPITALITY TO PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS AS A ONE-WAY STREET.

4. ASSUMING THAT TIMING (SWITCH WITH MOSCOW) AND RECIPROCITY PROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED, WE SEE NO MAJOR ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS. IF BULGARIAN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TAKES THE DELEGATION IN HAND, TRANSPORTATION SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM; AND IF DELEGATION PARTICIPATES IN SEPTEMBER 5 EVENING "AMERICA DAY" RECEPTION AT THE US PAVILION IN PLOVDIV, IT MAY BE POSSIBLE FOR ITS PLANE TO RECEIVE PERMISSION TO LAND THERE. IN THE SEPTEMBER 5 TIME FRAME, ACCOMMODATION IS MORE LIKELY TO BE AVAILABLE IN SOFIA, BUT NOT IN PLOVDIV. HOWEVER, IF DELEGATION HAS A PLANE OF ITS OWN, GETTING IT TO SOFIA FOR THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 5 SHOULD NOT BE IMPOSSIBLE.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 10 JUL 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975SOFIA01409  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Line Count:** 89  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 75 STATE 160788  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** GolinoFR  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 01 APR 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <01 APR 2003 by Izenbel0>; APPROVED <07 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION VIENNA FOR EWTC  
**TAGS:** OREP, BEXP, UR, CZ, BU, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006